



This document is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on 02/14/2014 and available online at <http://federalregister.gov/a/2014-03188>, and on [FDsys.gov](http://FDsys.gov)

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. PF14-3-000]

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC; Notice of Intent to Prepare an  
Environmental Assessment For the Planned Rock Springs Expansion Project and  
Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the Rock Springs Expansion Project (Project) involving construction and operation of facilities by Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company, LLC (Transco) in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and Cecil County, Maryland. The Commission will use this EA in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

This notice announces the opening of the scoping process the Commission will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the project. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EA. Please note that the **scoping period will close on March 10, 2014.**

This notice is being sent to the Commission's current environmental mailing list for this project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this planned project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, a pipeline company representative may contact you about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the planned facilities. The company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. However, if the Commission approves the project, that approval conveys with it the right of eminent domain. Therefore, if easement negotiations fail to produce an agreement, the pipeline company could initiate condemnation proceedings where compensation would be determined in accordance with state law.

A fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?" is available for viewing on the FERC website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)). This fact sheet addresses a number of typically-asked questions,

including the use of eminent domain and how to participate in the Commission's proceedings.

### **Summary of the Planned Project**

Transco is proposing to construct facilities to provide 192,000 dekatherms per day of incremental firm transportation capacity from Transco's Market Pool Station 210 in Mercer County, New Jersey to Old Dominion Electric Cooperative's (ODEC) proposed expansion, referred to as the Wildcat Point Generating Facility (Wildcat Plant) in Cecil County, Maryland. Construction of the Project is scheduled to begin on August 1, 2015 to meet the proposed in-service date of August 2016.

The Rock Springs Expansion Project would consist of the following facilities:

- Approximately 10.6 miles of new 20-inch diameter pipeline lateral from Transco's existing Mainlines "A" and "B" near milepost (MP) 1682.8 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to the proposed Wildcat Plant in Cecil County, Maryland;
- Piping and valve modifications to the existing Transco Compressor Station 200 in Chester County, Pennsylvania;
- A pig launcher and valve facility at the start of the pipeline lateral, including two tie-ins;<sup>1</sup>
- A back-pressure control regulator valve to increase operational pressure flexibility; located either (1) near the existing 30-inch Mainline "A" block valve at MP 1691.1 or (2) near MP 1682.8, both in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; and
- A 4,000 horsepower electric motor driven compressor station, designated as Compressor Station 196, with metering facilities at the terminus of the pipeline lateral. A pig receiver to be installed at the terminus of the pipeline lateral within the compressor station.

The general location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A "pig" is a tool that the pipeline company inserts into and pushes through the pipeline for cleaning the pipeline, conducting internal inspections, or other purposes.

<sup>2</sup> The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the Federal Register. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov) using the link called "eLibrary" or from the Commission's

### **Land Requirements for Construction**

Construction of the proposed facilities would disturb approximately 220.9 acres of land for the aboveground facilities and the pipeline lateral. Following construction, Transco would maintain approximately 55.3 acres for permanent operation of the Project's facilities; the remaining acreage would be restored and revert to former uses. Transco is continuing to evaluate the construction and operation land requirements for the launcher and valve facility at the start of the pipeline lateral, as well as the back-pressure control regulator valve, therefore the aforementioned acreages are preliminary estimations. Approximately 34 percent of the proposed pipeline route is situated adjacent to existing utility or road rights-of-way.

### **The EA Process**

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the Commission to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from an action whenever it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. NEPA also requires us<sup>3</sup> to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. This process is referred to as scoping. The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EA on the important environmental issues. By this notice, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues to address in the EA. We will consider all filed comments during the preparation of the EA.

In the EA we will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the planned project under these general headings:

- geology and soils;
- land use;
- water resources, fisheries, and wetlands;
- cultural resources;
- vegetation and wildlife;
- air quality and noise;
- endangered and threatened species; and
- public safety.

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Public Reference Room, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, or call (202) 502-8371. For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the last page of this notice.

<sup>3</sup> “We,” “us,” and “our” refer to the environmental staff of the Commission’s Office of Energy Projects.

We will also evaluate possible alternatives to the planned project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

Although no formal application has been filed, we have already initiated our NEPA review under the Commission's pre-filing process. The purpose of the pre-filing process is to encourage early involvement of interested stakeholders and to identify and resolve issues before the FERC receives an application. As part of our pre-filing review, we have begun to contact some federal and state agencies to discuss their involvement in the scoping process and the preparation of the EA.

The EA will present our independent analysis of the issues. The EA will be available in the public record through eLibrary. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, we may also publish and distribute the EA to the public for an allotted comment period. We will consider all comments on the EA before we make our recommendations to the Commission. To ensure we have the opportunity to consider and address your comments, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation section beginning on page 6.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues related to this project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA<sup>4</sup>. Agencies that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided under the Public Participation section of this notice. Currently, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has expressed its intention to participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EA to satisfy its NEPA responsibilities related to this project.

### **Consultations Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act**

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we are using this notice to initiate consultation with the applicable State Historic Preservation Office(s), and to solicit their views and those of other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public on the project's potential effects on historic properties.<sup>5</sup> We will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPO(s) as the project develops. On natural gas facility projects, the APE at a minimum

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<sup>4</sup> The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.6.

<sup>5</sup> The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regulations are at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Those regulations define historic properties as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

encompasses all areas subject to ground disturbance (examples include construction right-of-way, contractor/pipe storage yards, compressor stations, and access roads). Our EA for this project will document our findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

### **Currently Identified Environmental Issues**

We have already identified several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the planned facilities and the environmental information provided by Transco. This preliminary list of issues may change based on your comments and our analysis.

- Transco has identified 19 waterbodies during preliminary field surveys that are crossed within the proposed Project area. Five of the waterbody crossings are characterized as intermediate crossings and the remaining are characterized as minor waterbody crossings with crossing widths less than 10 feet. The intermediate waterbody crossings vary in crossing widths ranging from 10 to 49 feet. The intermediate waterbody crossings include: Fishing Creek (21.0 feet wide); Peters Creek (46.5 feet wide); Puddle Duck Creek (14.9 feet wide); Conowingo Creek (49.2 feet wide); and Unnamed Tributary of Conowingo Creek (10 feet wide).
- Transco has identified four palustrine emergent wetlands during preliminary field surveys that are crossed within the proposed Project area totaling approximately 0.4 acre of temporary impact.
- Preliminary field surveys, along with review of available sources and informal consultation with federal and state agencies have established that three federally-listed species (bog turtle [*Clemmys muhlenbergii*], small whorled pogonia [*Isotria medeoloides*], and Indiana bat [*Myotis sodalis*]), one species proposed to be federally-listed as endangered (northern long-eared bat [*Myotis septentrionalis*]), and 36 state-listed or protected species could potentially occur within the proposed Project area.
- Two residences along the pipeline route near MP 8.6 may be impacted by construction activities as they are located within 50 feet of the proposed workspace.

### **Public Participation**

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental

effects, reasonable alternatives, and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impacts. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please send your comments so that the Commission receives them in Washington, DC on or before **March 10, 2014**.

For your convenience, there are three methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. In all instances, please reference the project docket number (PF14-3-000) with your submission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or [efiling@ferc.gov](mailto:efiling@ferc.gov).

- (1) You can file your comments electronically using the [eComment](#) feature located on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). This is an easy method for interested persons to submit brief, text-only comments on a project;
- (2) You can file your comments electronically using the [eFiling](#) feature located on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on "[eRegister](#)." You must select the type of filing you are making. If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select "Comment on a Filing"; or
- (3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address:

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street NE, Room 1A  
Washington, DC 20426

### **Environmental Mailing List**

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American Tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission's regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits comments on the project. We will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that we send the

information related to this environmental review to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the planned project.

If we publish and distribute the EA, copies will be sent to the environmental mailing list for public review and comment. **If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the document instead of the CD version or would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please return the attached Information Request (appendix 2).**

### **Becoming an Intervenor**

Once Transco files its application with the Commission, you may want to become an “intervenor” which is an official party to the Commission’s proceeding. Intervenor play a more formal role in the process and are able to file briefs, appear at hearings, and be heard by the courts if they choose to appeal the Commission’s final ruling. An intervenor formally participates in the proceeding by filing a request to intervene. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are in the User’s Guide under the “e-filing” link on the Commission’s website. Please note that the Commission will not accept requests for intervenor status at this time. You must wait until the Commission receives a formal application for the project.

### **Additional Information**

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at **(866) 208-FERC**, or on the FERC website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) using the eLibrary link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on “General Search” and enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the Docket Number field (i.e., PF14-3-000). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription which allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to [www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm](http://www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm).

Finally, public meetings or site visits will be posted on the Commission’s calendar located at [www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx](http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx) along with other related information.

Dated: February 7, 2014.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,  
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2014-03188 Filed 02/13/2014 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 02/14/2014]